

**Calendar No. 589**

108th Congress }  
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT  
{ 108-282

SERVITUDE AND EMANCIPATION ARCHIVAL  
RESEARCH CLEARINGHOUSE ACT OF 2003

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R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 1292

TO ESTABLISH A SERVITUDE AND EMANCIPATION ARCHIVAL  
RESEARCH CLEARINGHOUSE IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES



JUNE 21, 2004.—Ordered to be printed

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SERVITUDE AND EMANCIPATION ARCHIVAL RESEARCH  
CLEARINGHOUSE ACT OF 2003

JUNE 21, 2004.—Ordered to be printed

Ms. COLLINS, from the Committee on Governmental Affairs,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1292]

The Committee on Governmental Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1292) to establish a servitude and emancipation archival research clearinghouse in the National Archives, having considered the same reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of S. 1292 is to authorize the Archivist of the United States to establish, as part of the National Archives, a national database consisting of historic records of servitude and emancipation in the United States to assist African Americans in researching their genealogy. S. 1292 would authorize funds to be appropriated to establish the national database and for grants to States, colleges, universities, libraries, and museums to preserve local records related to servitude and emancipation.

## II. BACKGROUND

African Americans in the United States face a unique challenge when conducting genealogical research. Currently, records of emancipation and slavery are difficult to access, insufficiently archived and cataloged, and slowly crumbling due to uneven preservation efforts. Many of their ancestors' records were kept by private slave-trading companies and large plantation owners. Instead of looking up wills, land deeds, birth and death certificates, and other traditional genealogical research documents, African Americans must often seek to identify the name of former slave owners, hoping that the owners kept records of pertinent information, such as births and deaths.

Even after 1865, discrimination in many States prevented voter registration, business ownership, school attendance, and other privileges of citizenship that would produce traceable documentation. While National Archives maintains former Freedman's Bureau records, many records from this era are held in State and university collections. Some States and localities have undertaken efforts to collect these documents with varying degrees of success.

S. 1292 proposes the establishment of a clearinghouse to catalog various documents that would assist African Americans in search of a history that, because of slavery, cannot easily be found in the most commonly searched registers and census records.

S. 1292 authorizes \$5,000,000 to create the national database within the National Archives authorized by this Act. It also authorizes \$5,000,000 for the National Archives to provide grants to States, colleges, universities, libraries, and museums to preserve local records of servitude and emancipation.

## III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 1292 was introduced on June 19, 2003, by Senators Landrieu, Levin, Bayh, Fitzgerald, Schumer, Voinovich, Durbin, and Stabenow and was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs. On June 2, 2004, the Committee considered S. 1292, and ordered the bill, as amended, reported by voice vote.

The amendment, offered by Senator Levin, authorized such sums as are necessary for the cost of operating and maintaining the national clearinghouse. In addition, the amendment added libraries and museums to States, universities, and colleges as potential grant recipients. The Committee approved the amendment by voice vote.

A companion bill, H.R. 4147, was introduced in the House by Representative Elijah Cummings on April 2, 2004, and has been referred to the Committee on Government Reform.

## IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 titles the bill as the "Servitude and Emancipation Archival Research Clearinghouse Act of 2003."

Section 2(a) would establish a national database consisting of historic records of servitude and emancipation in the United States to assist African Americans in researching their genealogy.

Section 2(b) provides that the database established by this Act shall be maintained by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Section 3 authorizes appropriations to establish, maintain and provide grants to States, colleges, universities, libraries, and museums to preserve local records of servitude and emancipation.

V. ESTIMATED COST OF LEGISLATION

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, June 7, 2004.*

Hon. SUSAN M. COLLINS,  
*Chairman, Committee on Governmental Affairs,*  
*U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed estimate for S. 1292, the Servitude and Emancipation Archival Research Clearinghouse Act of 2003.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Matthew Pickford.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH ROBINSON  
(For Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director).

Enclosure.

*S. 1292—Servitude and Emancipation Archival Research Clearinghouse Act of 2003*

Summary: S. 1292 would require the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), with the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), to establish a national database of historic records relating to slavery in the United States and to provide grants to states, colleges, universities, libraries, and museums to preserve local records concerning slavery. The legislation would authorize the appropriation of \$5 million for the national database and \$5 million for local preservation grants. CBO estimates that NHPRC would need \$1 million a year to update and maintain the database after it is established. Based on information from NARA, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$12 million over the 2005–2009 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting S. 1292 would not affect direct spending or revenues.

S. 1292 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would benefit state and local governments by providing \$5 million in grants to preserve local records related to slavery.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted by the beginning of fiscal year 2005. CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$12 million over the 2005–2009 period. Estimated outlays are based on information from NARA and historical spending patterns of similar programs. The estimated budgetary impact of S. 1292 is shown on the following table. The cost of this legislation falls within budget function 800 (general government).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Establish National Database:					
Authorization Level .....	5	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays .....	0	3	2	0	0
Local Preservation Grants:					
Authorization Level .....	1	1	1	1	1
Estimated Outlays .....	1	1	1	1	1
Maintain National Database:					
Authorization Level .....	0	0	0	1	1
Estimated Outlays .....	0	0	0	1	1
Total Changes:					
Authorization Level .....	6	1	1	2	2
Estimated Outlays .....	1	4	3	2	2

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: S. 1292 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would benefit state and local governments by providing \$5 million in grants to preserve local records related to slavery.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Matthew Pickford; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Sarah Puro; and Impact on Private-Sector: Paige Piper/Bach.

Estimate approved by: Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

#### VI. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill. CBO states that there are no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. The legislation contains no other regulatory impact.

#### VII. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, there are no changes in existing law made by the bill as reported.